

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT A 01814 192248Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5014

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1814

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: EAID, PFOR, HA
SUBJECT: OAS AGENDA MEETING

REF: (A) PORT AU PRINCE 1114, (B) PORT AU PRINCE 1250,
(C) STATE 112928

1. COMMENTS THAT FOLLOW BASED ON AGENDA SUBMITTED 6 APRIL
BY PORT AU PRINCE 1250. ASSUME NO MAJOR REVISIONS.
2. APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY COMMENT AND HOPE OUR COMMENT
CAN BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. OAS SHOULD BE AWARE,
HOWEVER, THAT WE AND OTHER DONORS DID NOT KNOW OAS PLANNED
TO HOLD AGENDA DISCUSSION SO SOON IN WASHINGTON. WE DOUBT
OTHER DONORS WILL BE ABLE TO PASS COMMENT UP IN TIME FOR
NEXT WEEK'S MEETING. HOPE OAS WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY
FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH LOCAL REPS PRIOR FINALIZING
AGENDA WITH GOH.
3. WE BELIEVE WE CAN USE AGENDA LARGELY AS IS. SESSIONS
COVER MAJOR AREAS OF INTEREST, AND SESSIONS IV AND V SHOULD
BE PARTICULARLY RELEVANT. OAS SHOULD BE MADE AWARE, HOWEVER,
THAT WE PLAN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE SESSIONS
TO BRING UP MAJOR CONCERNS AND THAT WE REGARD
THIS JUNE MEETING EXCEPTIONALLY IMPORTANT IN
ESTABLISHING BETTER PHILOSOPHIC UNDERSTANDING OF
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FUTURE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND BETTER MECHANISM
FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN ALL DONORS AND GOH.

4. KEY PROBLEM IS ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY. IDB REP
AND OTHERS POINTED THIS OUT STRONGLY IN MARCH
MEETING (PORT AU PRINCE 1114) AND POINT MUST BE
DRIVEN HOME IN JUNE MEETING. PROBLEM PRIMARILY

MANIFEST ITSELF IN INSTITUTIONAL-HUMAN RESOURCE TERMS. DONOR PROJECTS ARE BEGINNING TO BE COMPETITIVE WITH EACH OTHER BECAUSE OF INADEQUATELY QUALIFIED OR NON-EXISTENT GOH HUMAN RESOURCES TO STAFF THEIR PROJECTS. MUCH GREAT COORDINATION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROJECTS WILL HAVE TO BE INTRODUCED -- PERHAPS UNDER UMBRELLA OF JOINT COMMISSION -- SO THAT DONORS CAN A) GET BETTER COLLECTIVE APPRECIATION OF HOW THEIR PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS CAN AND SHOULD INTERMESH; B) GET ASSURANCES THAT PROJECTS THEY ARE UNDERTAKING WILL BE ADEQUATELY STAFFED BY GOH; C) HAVE OPPORTUNITY OF OFFERING PRACTICAL WAY OF DEALING WITH KEY ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY PROBLEM FOR EXAMPLE, BY UPGRADING DEVELOPMENT MINISTRIES IN TERMS OF RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SALARIES AND BY IMPROVING CONADEP'S PERFORMANCE IN BOTH

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION. IMPROVED COORDINATION SHOULD BRING IMPROVED PERFORMANCE.

5. OTHER KEY ITEM FOR DISCUSSION IS ESSENTIALLY ONE

OF GOH COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT. CEPIC'S SESSIONS IN PAST HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY STATED IN TERMS OF GOH NEEDS AND REQUESTS FOR DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS. WHILE UNDERSTANDABLE ON GOH PART, THIS PATTERN SHOULD NOT CONTINUE. IT TENDS TO PERPETUATE GOH ASSUMPTION THAT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WILL BE INFINITELY AVAILABLE, AND IT INHIBITS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN GOH OF REAL SENSE OF PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE EFFORT IN HAITI. THIS IMPORTANT PHILOSOPHIC POINT HAS A VERY PRACTICAL COROLLARY IN CONFIDENTIAL

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TERMS OF ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY PROBLEM: GOH HAS NOT RAISED SALARIES BECAUSE IT PLEADS INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES. WE SHOULD MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO PERSUADE GOH THAT IT CAN HELP SOLVE THIS KEY PROBLEM BY INCREASING ITS REVENUES AND FISCALIZING ITS NON-BUDGETARY ACCOUNTS.

6. GOH HAS NUMBER OF WAYS AVAILABLE TO IT FOR INCREASING REVENUE AND IMPROVING CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT. THESE ARE MEASURES THAT GOH IS AWARE OF BUT HAS DONE RELATIVELY LITTLE TO ADVANCE. WE THINK THEY CAN BE RAISED APPROPRIATELY DURING SESSION II AND URGED ON GOH AS MEASURES IT SHOULD TAKE TO HELP ITSELF AND JUSTIFY FOREIGN EFFORTS. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT WISH TO GET BOGGED DOWN IN DETAILS OF THESE PARTICULAR MEASURES AT JUNE MEETING. RATHER WE WISH TO PUT EMPHASIS ON BROADER ISSUES OF ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY AND COMMITMENT WHILE PUTTING GOH REPS ON NOTICE THAT WE INTEND SUBSEQUENT DETAILED DISCUSSION OF FISCAL MEASURES AT FURTHER PORT AU PRINCE MEETINGS. SEPTEMBER DESCRIBES MATTERS -- SPECIAL FUNDS, CUSTOMS, BUDGET -- WE

WANT TO HAVE ON AGENDA FOR SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS.
ISHAM

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